

REMARKS

This application is a divisional of U.S. patent application No. 09/368,680, now allowed. In response to an election requirement dated March 27, 2001 in the parent application, original claims 5-8, 18, 19 and 26-30 were withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected species. This Preliminary Amendment now presents these claims with amendments reflecting the amendments made to the allowed claims in the parent application. Claims 5, 7, 18, 19, 26 and 27 are independent.

In the parent application, the claims therein had been variously rejected over references primarily including U.S. Patent 4,639,020 to Rung et al. and U.S. Patent 4,896,902 to Weston, but were amended to overcome the rejections.

In the present application, independent claim 5 includes all the limitations of allowed independent claim 1. Claim 6 depends from claim 5. Independent claim 7 includes all the limitations of allowed independent claim 1. Claim 8 depends from claim 7.

Independent claims 18 and 19 each contain all the limitations of allowed independent claim 17.

Independent claims 26 and 27 each contain all the limitations of allowed independent claim 23. Claim 28 depends from claim 27. Claim 29 depends from claim 26. Claim 30 depends from claim 29.

The applicant therefore respectfully submits that independent claims 5, 7, 18, 19, 26 and 27, together with the remaining claims respectively dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the prior art of record in the parent application for the same reasons as the allowed claims in the parent application.

The applicant respectfully submits that this application, with claims 5-8, 18, 19 and 26-30, is in condition for allowance and prompt issuance of a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees, or to credit any overpayment, due by reason of this Preliminary Amendment to Deposit Account No. 01-0035.

Respectfully submitted,
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